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# A SERMON,

DELIVERED IN THE

SECOND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, NORWICH,

**On the fourth of July, 1834.**

AT THE REQUEST OF THE

***Anti-Slavery Society of Norwich, Connecticut.***

BY JAMES T. DICKINSON,
Pastor of the Second Congregational Church.

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# SERMON.

PROVERBS, XXXI. 9.

"Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy."

ECCLESIASTES, IV. 1.

"So I returned and considered all the oppressions that are under the sun and behold the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comforter and on the side of the oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter."

JEREMIAH, XXII. 3.

"Thus saith the Lord: Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor; and do no wrong."

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THE Bible speaks with great frequency, and in terms of unmeasured severity, of the sin of oppression. Take as a specimen such language as the following: *Wo unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed; to turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people. Rob not the poor, because he is poor; neither oppress the afflicted in the gate: for the Lord will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoiled them.* Jehovah represents himself as taking the part of the oppressed: *For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, will I arise saith the Lord. The Lord executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed. He shall save the children of the needy, and shall break in pieces the oppressor.* Any one who has never examined the Bible with reference to this subject, will be surprised to find how much it contains respecting oppression. Passages without number might be quoted, similar to those already cited. It may be considered then a point settled, that God frowns upon oppression, and considers the oppressor as a sinner.

That modern slave-holding is oppression, and oppression too of the worst kind, is another point that can be established with equal certainty. Individuals there indeed are, that are *called* slave-holders, who render to their servants "that which is just and equal." But these are slave-holders only in *name*. When we speak of slave-holding, we mean that system which claims the right of buying and selling human beings, of tearing asunder families, of withholding wages, and of shutting out instruction, and consequently the Bible. This system we say is a system of oppression, and therefore is regarded by the Bible as *sin*. Those persons who are nominally slave-holders, but who do not claim the right of *property* in their servants, nor withhold from them a reasonable compensation for their labor, nor deny them instruction and the Bible, are not slave-holders in *fact*, whatever they may be in form or name. When we speak of slave-holders, we do not mean *them*. We however believe the number of this class of persons in our country to be small; for if the number were considerable, we should see the petitions going up to the legislatures of the several states for the repeal of oppressive laws: we should see them uniting their efforts, and doing all in their power to put an end to the system of slavery. But we see no such thing. It is evident that a majority of our countrymen, at least, are willing that the oppression should continue; for its continuance depends only upon the will of the majority. Let the will of the majority be changed, and slavery will cease. What we propose to do is, to act upon this will until it is changed.

I stand before you, my friends, to-day, as the appointed organ of the Anti-Slavery Society of Norwich and vicinity, to explain and vindicate its doctrines and plans. But we shall be asked at once, Why preach on this subject at the North? Why form an Anti-Slavery Society in Norwich, when there are no slaves here? True there are no slaves in Norwich, but there are men in Norwich who, in conjunction with their countrymen, hold slaves in the District of Columbia, and in the Territories of Arkansas and Florida. The citizens of Norwich are just as much responsible for the continuance of slavery in the District of Columbia and the United States Territories, as the citizens of South Carolina are for the continuance of slavery in that state. The free states, being the majority, have the power and the right to set at liberty twenty-six thousand slaves. Every person who does not petition Congress on this subject, and exert his whole influence to procure the liberation of these twenty-six thousand, participates in the guilt of slave holding. Every person who holds sentiments in relation to slavery, which, if held by all, would allow Congress to remain inactive, and thus keep in bondage these twenty-six thousand human beings, is chargeable with sin. Every person whose sentiments in regard to slavery are correct, but who does not exert his influence to extend those sentiments, is also chargeable with sin. There is need, then, of an anti-slavery society among us. We need such a society to correct and embody public sentiment, and cause it to bear against this sin.—The opinion prevails here, that we have no right to meddle with this subject. This opinion is entirely wrong and must be corrected. We not only have a right to meddle with it, but it is our positive duty, and we commit sin if we do not meddle with it; for so long as we refuse to act on this subject, we are holding our fellow-creatures in bondage, by con-

tributing our influence to the upholding of that public sentiment which upholds the system of slavery. But besides our obligations to the twenty-six thousand slaves referred to, we have duties to perform to our Southern brethren in relation to this subject. We are bound to show them their duty. The opinion has been almost universal in the free states, that we have no right to interfere with slavery at the South. If by interference it be meant that we have no right to instigate the slaves to rebellion, or that Congress has no right to nullify the laws of any of the states, we most fully grant *such* interference would be wrong. But who has ever dreamed of such interference as this? Abolitionists have not. They have always distinctly disclaimed such intentions. If by interference, it be meant that we have no right to preach or publish the truth to our Southern brethren, then we say the opinion is wrong. It is not only our right, but our duty, to point out to them the sin of slave-holding, just as it is our duty to show to the Chinese, the Hindoo, and the Sandwich Islander, the sin of idolatry. Our duty to the people of the South is in some respects more imperative than our duty to the people of other lands — They are our countrymen; and they are cherishing a sin which is bringing disgrace upon our country in the eyes of the whole world, and which threatens to draw down upon us the vengeance of the God of the oppressed. When therefore we see them buying and selling their fellow men, separating husbands from wives, and parents from children; when we see them enacting laws which forbid their instruction, and thus shutting them out from the Bible, we are bound to tell them that such things are sinful, and that they ought to repent. Will it be objected that we have never lived at the South, and are not so well qualified to judge of the guilt of slavery as those who are on the spot; and that consequently we had better leave the work of reformation to those who are best acquainted with the sin? It is true we are not so well acquainted with the sin as they are; and *for that very reason* we think we are better qualified to expose it and put it down. Is not the man who drinks only water the best person to expose the evils of drunkenness, and moderate drinking, and rumselling? Must he establish a dram-shop, and watch the operation of the business, before he can tell whether it is sinful? Must he become a drunkard himself, before he can know the evils of drinking! Obviously, the more temperate he is, the better qualified he is to be a temperance reformer. The same rule holds true in regard to all other sin. The less we know of sin practically, the better qualified we are to put down sin. Who are the best men to put down the theatre and the gaming house? Plainly, not the men who frequent the theatre—not the men who are found in the gaming house! Who, then, are the best men to expose the sin of slavery? Those certainly who are the least acquainted with it. We at the North, therefore are better qualified than the people of the South to commence and carry forward this reformation. We are at least bound to liberate our own slaves in the District of Columbia and the Territories, and to reason with all our countrymen until we persuade them to liberate theirs.

We proceed now to set forth what we believe to be the true doctrine in regard to slavery. Our doctrine is, that *all slave-holding is sin*—meaning by slave-holding, the claiming and exercising of the right of property in man, of buying and selling human beings, of separating families, of withhold-

ing the Bible, and of refusing compensation for services. Those who deny the sinfulness of slave-holding, are always careful to give such a definition of slavery as to include those few persons who are only *nominal* slave-holders. They make their definition loose and indefinite, as if for the very purpose of palliating the sin. I have read with grief the apologies for slave-holding, in the form of loose definitions, which have been spread before the community by some of our best men, and by our most respectable religious periodicals. The Christian Spectator, in an article on slavery, uses the following language: "It is necessary to define distinctly the subject in debate, viz: *What is slavery?* Before attempting a direct answer to this question, it is to be remarked that there are many varieties of slavery; that the laws of different countries and ages limit and modify the relations of master and slave, in many different degrees; and that therefore the answer ought to include slavery in all its forms." But we would ask, what have we to do with slavery in other countries, and other ages? The inquiry respects slavery in our own country. When the friends of temperance institute an inquiry into the effects of ardent spirits as used in our country, they do not consider it necessary to extend the inquiry to wine and opium, and every thing of the kind, which has been used in all countries and in all ages. Why then attempt to include every species of servitude in a definition of American slavery? but let us hear the definition which the Spectator finally gives of slavery. "It is an artificial relation, or civil constitution, by which one man is invested with property in the labor of another, to whom, by virtue of that relation, he owes the duties of protection, support and government, and who owes him in return, obedience and submission." This definition, it will be seen includes apprenticeship, as well as slavery. The master is invested with property in the labor of his apprentice, as really as the slave-holder is in the labor of his slave. With such a definition, it is not strange that the writer should be able to show that slave holding does not necessarily imply guilt, and that immediate emancipation is not necessarily a duty.

The American Quarterly Observer, in an article on the Declaration of American Independence, advances similar sentiments. The writer no where gives a formal definition of slavery, but the following passage will convey some idea of his views on this subject: "Slavery is not a *malum in se*, but a *malum per consequentia;* not possessing in itself any moral quality whatsoever, but taking its moral hue from the accompanying circumstances, from the various physical relations of the parties to one another, and the motives, feelings and views of the masters in retaining their slaves in bondage." Allowing this doctrine to be correct, we might with equal propriety say that rum-selling in itself considered has no moral quality whatever. When sold for medical purposes, or for any purpose except as a drink for persons in health, it is an entirely innocent business. And yet if we open one of the reports of the American Temperance Society, we read that "*between the traffic in ardent spirits and a profession of the Christian religion there is a total hostility.*" We turn to another page, and read over the places where rum is sold should be written, "*The way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.*" We read on, and come to this assertion, "*Distillers, retailers and drunkards are culprits in the eyes of all sober men.*" Now we ask, why do not those who denounce

abolitionists for calling slave-holding a sin, arraign the American Temperance Society for using such unqualified language in respect to the traffic in ardent spirits, when it is known that there are men who sell ardent spirits from good motives? When we attack any sin, we attack some form of it that is known to exist, and we use language that is general.—When we attack rum-selling, we mean rum-selling as it is commonly practised, without stopping to make the exceptions. When we attack slave-holding we mean such slave-holding as is common in our country. If any persons are slave-holders only in name, and we suppose there are a few such, let it be understood that we have no controversy with them.

We come now to the question, What is slavery? and we wish for a definition that shall not be *abstract*, but applicable to the case under consideration, viz. slavery as it exists at the present day in our own country. Let us go then to the *slave laws and to facts*, to learn what slavery is, and then we will make out our definition. And let it be here observed, that in a country like ours, where the laws depend upon the will of the majority, and where elections are annual, it is a fair presumption that the laws express the decided sentiment of a majority of the people. And since the laws are sanctioned by the practice and silent consent of many of those who are said to be unfriendly to the system of slavery, but who make no efforts to procure a change of these laws, we may conclude that not only a majority, but the great body of the people, are willing that they should remain as they are. The slave-laws, then, may be considered as containing the embodied sentiments of the nation in regard to slavery. Let us examine some of the provisions of these laws.

In the first place, the laws of all the slave-holding states regard slaves, *not as human beings, but as things, or beasts; not as the owners of their own bodies and souls, but as the property of their masters.* One or two quotations will be sufficient to illustrate this point. The law of South Carolina is as follows: "Slaves shall be deemed, sold, taken, reputed and adjudged, in law, to be *chattels personal* in the hands of their owners or possessors, and their executors, administrators and assigns, to all intents, constructions, and purposes whatsoever." According to the civil code of Louisiana, "A slave is one who is in the power of the master to whom he belongs. The master may sell him, dispose of his person, his industry, and his labor; he can do nothing, possess nothing, nor acquire any thing, but what must belong to his master."

Again, *the slave is entirely subject to the will of the master, and may be punished by him even with death.* The laws in relation to the protection of the life of the slave are so peculiar that they deserve especial consideration. If we read only one clause of a statute, we should conclude that the protection of the slave is intended; but if we read on, we find some exception or provision which entirely nullifies the law, and leaves the slave at the mercy of the master or overseer. An act of North Carolina, passed in 1798, reads thus: "Whereas by another act of assembly, passed in the year 1774, the killing of a slave, however wanton, cruel and

*These quotations from the slave laws, and most of those that follow, are from "Stroud's Slave Laws." The references to this and to other authorities quoted in different parts of the discourse, are for the sake of convenience omitted.

deliberate, is only punished in the first instance by imprisonment and paying the value thereof to the owner, which distinction of criminality between the murder of a white person & one who is equally a human creature, but merely of a different complexion, is disgraceful to humanity, and degrading in the highest degree to the laws and principles of a free, Christian and enlightened country, Be it enacted, &c. That if any person shall hereafter be guilty of wilfully and maliciously killing a slave, such offender shall, upon the first conviction thereof, be adjudged guilty of murder, and shall suffer the same punishment as if he had killed a free man; *Provided always, this act shall not extend to the person killing a slave outlawed by virtue of any act of assembly of this State, or to any slave in the act of resistance to his lawful owner or master, or to any slave dying under moderate correction.*" The law of Georgia is substantially the same. Now when we take into consideration this law, and all the circumstances connected with it, it appears to be the very height of cruelty. It allows the murder of an *outlawed* slave—and when is a slave an outlaw? "A proclamation of outlawry against a slave is authorised, whenever he runs away from his master, conceals himself in some obscure retreat, and to sustain life, kills a hog, or some animal of the cattle kind!!" The meaning of the clause which speaks of resistance may be known from a reported case, in which it has been "judicially determined that it is justifiable to kill a slave resisting or *offering* to resist his master by force." The absurdity of styling that correction "*moderate*" which causes death, is too gross to need comment. Here then is a law, which, while it speaks of its being "disgraceful to humanity" to abuse a slave because he has a "different complexion," directly after gives license to murder him whenever the slave *offers* to resist, or whenever the master or overseer chooses to resort to *moderate* correction.

But there is another law common to all the slave States, which effectually excludes the slave from the protection of law and leaves him at the mercy, not of the master merely, but of all other white men. I refer to the law which *excludes the colored man from giving testimony against the white man.* Any white man can abuse or kill any number of slaves or free colored men, and provided no white man is present as a witness, he cannot be convicted. This law exposes the whole colored race to the abuse of any and of every white man, and particularly of that class of men whom Mr. Wirt styles the "last and lowest, a *feculum* of beings, called *overseers*—the most abject, degraded, unprincipled race—always cap in hand to the dons who employ them, and furnishing materials for the exercise of their pride, insolence, and spirit of domination."

Again, *the slave laws are such as almost entirely to destroy the institution of marriage, and to produce general licentiousness.* I quote as proof the testimony of the Rev. Mr. Paxton, a friend of the Colonization Society, and formerly a slave-holder: "Some slaves have indeed a marriage ceremony performed. It is however usually done by one of their own color, and of course is not a legal transaction. And if done by a person legally authorised to perform marriages, still it would have no authority, *because the law does not recognise marriage among slaves,* so as to clothe it with the rights and immunities which it has among citizens. The owner of either party might the next day or hour break up the connection, in any way he pleased. In fact, these connections have no protection, and are

so often broken up by sales and transfers and removals, that they are by the slaves often called *taking up together*. The sense of marriage fidelity must be greatly weakened, if not wholly destroyed, by such a state of things. The effect is most disastrous." Mr. Paxton then goes on to give the details of this disastrous effect, both upon the slaves and upon the white population; but I will not give you pain by presenting the disgusting picture. A system better fitted to produce licentiousness could not be devised, than the slave system.

Again, *the slave laws forbid the teaching of slaves to read or write, and thus preclude their instruction in the Scriptures.* Laws against the instruction of slaves were enacted as early as 1740, and these laws have been growing more and more severe ever since. The revised code of Virginia contains an enactment which declares that "any school or schools for teaching them, [i. e. all negroes, or mulattoes, whether bond or free] reading or writing, either in the day or night, under whatsoever pretext, shall be deemed and considered an unlawful assembly." In North Carolina, "to teach a slave to read or write, or to sell or give him any book or pamphlet, is punished with sixty-nine lashes, or with imprisonment at the discretion of the court, if the offender be a free negro; and with a fine of two hundred dollars, if a white." The reason set forth in this law is, that "teaching slaves to read and write tends to excite dissatisfaction in their minds, and to produce insurrection and rebellion." The laws of the other slave states are similar. In Louisiana, an act has been passed within a few years of more than ordinary severity. The words of the statute are as follows: "If any person in Louisiana, from the bar, bench, stage, pulpit, or any other place, or in conversation, shall make use of any language, signs or actions, having a tendency to produce discontent among the free colored people, or insubordination among the slaves, such person shall be punished with imprisonment from three to twenty-one years, or with death at the discretion of the court." According to this law, the reading of the 58th chapter of Isaiah, when any colored person should be present, would be punishable with death; for surely that chapter would have *a tendency to produce discontent* in the minds of the oppressed.

I might go on quoting these oppressive laws for hours, but your patience must not be abused. After what I consider a faithful examination of this part of the subject, I have come to the conclusion that the laws afford no protection to the slave that is worth naming; and not only so, they *require* the slave-holder to be an oppressor, and consequently to break the laws of God. According to law, the slave can have *no property, no wife, no children, no Bible.* And what is this but making a man a heathen by statute? Forbid a man to hold property, and you make him a thief. Take away his wife and children and break up the marriage institution, and you make him licentious. Withhold from him the Bible, and you complete the whole work of degradation, and he is altogether a heathen.

We have thus seen what slavery is, according to law, and have said that if the laws were obeyed, they would make the slaves heathen. Let us now see whether they are not heathen in fact. On this point I will present some extracts from an essay prepared during the last year, under the direction of the Presbytery of Georgia, by the Rev. C. C. Jones, of

Liberty county. Mr. Jones, having under his pastoral charge six thousand slaves, has taken special pains to investigate their moral and religious condition; and this fact, in connection with the excellence of his character, gives to his testimony great weight. In reply to the question, "Has the negro access to the Scriptures?" he says, "The statutes of our respective states forbid it, or when through some oversight *they* do not, *custom* does. On the one hand he cannot be a *hearer* of the law, for oral instruction is but sparingly afforded him; and on the other hand he cannot *search the Scriptures*, for a knowledge of letters he has not, and cannot legally obtain." In regard to this oral instruction, of which Mr. Jones speaks, and of which our Southern brethren generally are beginning to speak, let it here be remarked, that it will not do to shut out the Bible from the slave. What is the great sin of the Romish church? It is that she will not give the Bible to the common people. This was the grand error which Luther exposed. And now, in this day of light, when we have voted that we will give the Bible to the whole world, shall we withhold it from our own countrymen, and pretend that they do not need it? Let us hear Mr. Jones farther: "It is a solemn fact which we must not conceal, that their private and public religious instruction forms no part of the aim of owners generally. There is no anxiety, no effort made to obtain such instruction. The great, the absorbing aim is, to work them profitably. They are shut out from our sympathies and efforts as immortal beings, and are educated and disciplined as creatures of profit, and of profit only, for this world." We sometimes hear it said, that large numbers of slaves are members of churches, and it is true that many of them do belong to the church; but on this point Mr. Jones observes, "the number of professors of religion [among the slaves] is small, that can present a correct view of the plan of salvation. True religion they are greatly inclined to place in profession, in forms, in ordinances; and true conversion in dreams, visions, trances, and voices; and these they offer to church sessions as evidences of conversion. Sometimes principles of conduct are adopted by church members, at so much variance with the gospel, that the grace of God is turned into laciviousness. No man knows the extent of their ignorance on the subject of religion, until he for himself makes special investigation. They believe in second sight, in apparitions, in charms, in witchcraft, in a kind of irresistible Satanic influence. The superstitions that were brought with them from Africa, have never fully been laid aside." In regard to the great mass who make no pretensions to religion, Mr. Jones says that their notions of God and of a future state are confused, and that "some are ignorant of the name itself of the exalted Saviour. The Mohammedan Africans who remain of the old stock of importations, though accustomed to hear the gospel preached, have been known to accommodate Christianity to Mohammedanism. God, say they, is Allah, and Jesus Christ is Mohammed; the religion is the same, but different countries have different names."

Mr. Jones gives a dark picture of the vices of slaves. Polygamy is common among them. "Little or no sacredness is attached to the marriage contract. It is viewed as a contract of convenience, that may be entered into and dissolved at any time. They generally unite without ceremony. Nothing is more common than the dissolution of marriage ties; and in-

stances of conjugal fidelity for a long course of years are exceedingly rare. Chastity in either sex is an exceedingly rare virtue. Such is the universality and greatness of the vice of lewdness, that t those who are acquainted with slave countries, not a word need be said. All the consequences of this vice are to be seen, not excepting infanticide itself." We further learn from the statements of Mr. Jones, that the slaves are proverbially thieves, that their word cannot be depended upon at all, and that they break the Sabbath almost universally, giving as an excuse, that they have no other time to work for themselves.

The Rev Mr. Converse, of Burlington, Vermont, who was at one period an agent of the Colonization Society, and resided for some time in Virginia, states in a discouse before the Vermont Colonization Society, that "almost nothing is done to instruct the slaves in the principles and duties of the Christian religion. The laws of the South strictly forbid thier being taught to read; and they make no provision for their being orally instructed. Ministers sometimes preach to them under peculiar and severe restrictions of the law. But with all that has yet been done, the majority are emphatically heathen, and what is very strange, heathens in the midst of a land of Sabbaths, and of churches, of Bibles, and of Christians. . . . Pious masters (with some honorable exceptions) are criminally negligent of giving religious instruction to their slaves. It has long been neglected, and masters have fallen into a deep sleep in reference to this matter. They can and do instruct their own children, and perhaps their house servants; while those called 'field hands' live and labor, and die without being once told by their pious masters that Jesus died to save sinners. Indeed, this is a most ungrateful task to the master. He is so much accustomed to speak to them in the rough tone of sternness and authority, that it requires an effort most revolting to his feelings, to assume the kind and gentle accents of a Christian teacher."

A writer in the Western Luminary, a respectable religious paper in Lexington, Kentucky, says, "I proclaim it abroad to the Christian world that heathenism is as real in the slave states as it is in the South Sea Islands, and that our negroes are justly objects of attention to the American and other boards of foreign missions, as the Indians of the Western wilds. What is it constitues heathenism? Is it to be destitute of a knowledge of God—of his holy word—never to have heard scarcely a sentence of it read through life—to know little or nothing of the history, character, instruction and mission of Jesus Christ—to be almost totally devoid of moral knowledge and feeling, of sentiments of probity, truth and chastity? If this constitutes heathenism, then are there thousands, millions of heathen in our own beloved land. There is one topic to which I will allude, which will serve to establish the heathenism of this population. I allude to the universal licentiousness which prevails. It may be said emphatically that chastity is no virtue among them—that its violation neither injures female character in their own estimation, or that of their master or mistress. No instruction is ever given—no censure pronounced. I speak not of the world; I speak of Christian families generally."

Much more testimony of this kind might be adduced; but this is sufficient to establish the point that most of the slaves are as truly ignorant of the Christian religion as the heathen. We are now in some measure pre

pared for a definition of slavery. And lest my own language should appear too strong, I will first make use of a definition which I find in the African Repository, from the pen of the Rev. J. Breckenridge, of Baltimore. I shall quote the passage entire, just as it stands, with the exception of substituting the word heathenism for a clause of a sentence which speaks of ignorance and the evils which proceed from it: "What is slavery?" says Mr. B. "We reply, it is that condition enforced by the laws of one half the States of this confederacy, in which one portion of the community, called masters, is allowed such power over another portion, called slaves, as 1st, To deprive them of the entire earnings of their labor, except only so much as is necessary to continue labor itself, by continuing healthful existence, thus committing clear robbery—2d, To reduce them to the necessity of universal concubinage, by denying to them the rights of marriage; thus breaking up the dearest relations of life, and encouraging universal prostitution—3d, To deprive them of the means and opportunities of moral and intellectual culture, thus perpetuating heathenism—4th, To set up between parents and their children an authority higher than the impulse of nature and the laws of God; which breaks up the authority of the father over his own offspring, and at pleasure separates the mother at a returnless distance from her child; thus abrogating the dearest laws of nature; thus outraging all decency and justice, and degrading and oppressing thousands upon thousands of beings created like themselves, in the image of the Most High God. This is slavery, as it is daily exhibited in every slave state."

To put this definition into my own language, it would stand thus:—Slavery is a system which, 1. *Claims the right of property in man*; 2. *Destroys the marriage contract among slaves*; 3. *Shuts the Bible from them*; 4. *Encourages and sustains the domestic slave-trade.* That this definition of slavery is authorised by the references we have made to the slave laws, and by the testimony adduced respecting the actual condition of the slaves, we presume all will admit. Slavery, then, is morally wrong, and every one who holds his fellow man in such slavery as this, is a sinner. And now comes the unavoidable inference, that immediately to repent of this sin is a duty, or in other words, *immediate emancipation is a duty.* But from this position many of our countrymen start back. Let us then examine it. Take one of the points of our definition. Is it right to buy and sell men as merchandise or beasts? Is it right to set up between parents and children an authority higher than that of the parent and the laws of God, and thus separate children from their mothers? Would it be proper to cease from tearing mothers from their children, and wives from their husbands, *gradually*? Ought not all laws which sanction and encourage such barbarity to be repealed *immediately*? i. e. at the very next session of each State Legislature, for this is what the word *immediately* means as applied to legislative acts. Ought not every slave-holder to cease from this day all acts which tear families asunder? In other words, ought not the domestic slave-trade, in these United States, to cease at once? It is computed by a friend of the Colonization Society, in an appendix to Clarkson's History of the Abolition of the slave-trade, that more than 60,000 slaves are "annually bought and sold, and involuntarily transferred from one part to another of this *free* and *happy* country." The American Quar-

erly Review states that 6,000 are sold and transported annually from Virginia alone, to the South and Southwest. Is this right? Ought it not to cease immediately? Shall we talk about the *gradual* abolition of such things as these? Mr. Benton, an agent of the American Sunday School Union in Missouri, says, that while prosecuting his agency, "he was applied to in more than a hundred instances by slaves who were about to be sold to Southern drivers, beseeching him in the most earnest manner to buy them, so that they might not be driven away from their wives, their children, their brothers and their sisters. Knowing that his feelings were abhorrent to slavery, they addressed him without reserve, and with an entreaty bordering on frenzy." "Curiosity," writes a gentleman in Charleston, to his friend in New York, "sometimes leads me to the auction sales of the negroes. A few days since I attended one. The bodies of these wretched beings were placed upright upon a table—their physical proportions examined—their defects and beauties noted! There I saw the father, looking with sullen contempt on the crowd, and expressing an indignation in his countenance which he dare not speak; and the mother, pressing her infants closer to her bosom with an involuntary grasp, and exclaiming in wild and simple earnestness, while the tears chased down her cheeks in quick succession, '*I cant leff my children—I wont leff my children!!*' But on the hammar went, reckless alike whether it united or sundered forever. At another time (he proceeds) I saw the concluding scene of this infernal drama. It was on the wharf. A slave ship for New Orleans was lying in the stream, and the poor negroes, handcuffed and pinioned, were hurried off in boats, eight at a time. There I witnessed the last farewell—the heart-rending separation of every earthly tie—the mute and agonizing embrace of the husband and wife, and the convulsive grasp of the mother and child, who were alike torn asunder forever. It was a living death—they never see or hear of each other more. Tears flowed fast, and mine among the rest." Now we ask again, ought this buying and selling of human beings to continue another day? You must agree with me in saying, no. But you will ask, what can we do? We cannot immediately stop it; and why therefore talk about immediate abolition? I answer that we can urge immediate duty upon these buyers and sellers, until they stop sinning, and that is the only way to stop them. The question before us is, What is duty? What is right? And if you are a Christian, or if you have a common humanity, you must admit that it is wicked to tear asunder families, and to treat human beings like cattle. You must admit that all persons who practice such cruelty ought immediately to stop. *So far, then, you are an immediate abolitionist.*

Take now another point of our definition. Is it right to deprive slaves of the means of moral and intellectual culture—to withhold from them the Bible, and thus to make them heathen? When I think of this feature of slavery, and of the indifference with which even good men treat this part of the subject, I know not what to say. I have no words that can express my feelings. Here we are, talking about the converson of the world—the *whole* world—expressing our sympathy for every form of heathenism—sending out our missionaries to explore every king dom and province of the empire of darkness—and at the same time, by the laws which we enact, and by the public sentiment which we cherish, we are making *our own*

*countrymen* heathen. Thus with one hand we are destroying heathenism, and with the other we are creating it. We hear that the Flat-head Indians beyond the Rocky Mountains want Missionaries, and immediately the whole church is awake, and cries, *Send them the men.* We hear of a tribe of savages in Eastern Africa, called Zoulahs, by whom it is thought Missionaries will be received, and at once five men are appointed to that station. But we hear of *two millions in our own country*, the most of whom are virtually heathen, and the church say, *Be silent! be profoundly silent!!* But, say our opposers, the slaves are permitted to receive *oral* instruction, and the nation is now waking up to the importance of giving them oral instruction.* This is the very climax of inconsistency. Go read the Missionary Herald. Hear what missionaries in heathen lands say about the necessity of establishing schools and educating the children, because the adults are so confirmed in vice and degradation, mental and moral, that they are almost beyond hope. See how much time they spend in translating the Bible and writing tracts. See them making preparations to convert the whole empire of China, chiefly by means of the Bible and other religious books! Why all this? Because a knowledge of letters must accompany, and in some cases go before oral instruction, in order to raise up the mind from heathenism. Oral instruction is good, peculiarly good, in its place; but it will be comparatively powerless alone. And yet there are Christians, who make great speeches about the importance of Bible societies, and Sunday schools, and Tract societies, and Education societies, who think that oral instruction for slaves will on the whole do very well, and that it would be wrong to disturb the prejudices of slave-holders, by insisting upon any thing more at present. What a world of inconsistency, and error, and prejudice, there is in the minds of many good men on this subject! We boast that we are the most enlightened and religious nation on the globe—we talk largely about our common schools, and the intelligence of the lower classes—we proclaim to the world that we have given every family in the nation a Bible, and that we are establishing Sabbath schools in every spot in our country where there are enough human beings to form a school,—we boast of all these things, while at the same time we strangely pretend that the slaves, whose intellects are the most obtuse, and therefore need the greatest amount of instruction, can get along very well with oral instruction alone! If this is not making void the law of God, I know not what is.

My heart bleeds when I hear Christians talking thus about oral instruction; and I tremble for my country, when I see her going systematically to work, as she has done, to keep a whole race of men in the lowest degradation—when I see her making laws that shut out men from heaven—when I see her shutting up the soul of man, and trampling upon the im-

*It is stated by those who believe that oral instruction is all that the slaves in present circumstances ought to receive, that in some Sabbath schools for slaves, the children acquire as much knowledge of the Bible as white children who can read. This only proves that we are under *peculiar* obligations to cultivate in every possible way minds that are so easily instructed. There must be now and then a Toussaint Louverture among such children. Great must be the sin of keeping back the knowledge of letters from such minds.

age of God there. "Wo for those that trample on a mind! a deathless thing! They know not what they do. Man, perchance, may light anew the torch he quenches; but for the soul! O tremble and beware not to lay rude hands upon God's image there." I tremble for my country, when I think of that vitiated public sentiment pervading the South and the North, which can tolerate such high-handed wickedness, and can even denounce the men who amid obloquy and persecution are doing what they can to show the people their sins. *Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord. Shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this? A wonderful and horrible thing is committed in the land: the prophets prophesy falsely, and my people love to have it so.*

My friends, I wish you to make up your minds in regard to this point. Is it right to shut out the slave from the Bible? Ought not *this* part of the slave system to cease at once? Ought not every slave-holder to begin today to teach his servants to read the Scriptures? Do you say that the laws forbid it? What of that? Suppose the laws should forbid you to teach your own children to read the Bible. Suppose they should forbid you to pray, as Nebuchadnezzar did in the case of Daniel - or to take a case exactly in point, suppose the laws should forbid you to propagate the Christian religion, as the rulers of the Jews did in the case of Peter and John. Would you obey such laws? What did the apostles do? *Did not we straitly command you,* (said the rulers) *that ye should not teach in his name? and behold ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.* This language is just that of our country, which says to the abolitionist who comes with the Bible in his hand, you will produce insurrection, and bring blood upon us. But hear the answer of the apostles. *Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, we ought to obey God rather than men.* So say we. We are not bound to obey laws which are contrary to the laws of God. We *are bound* to teach men to search the Scriptures, though all the powers of earth forbid. What Christian does not know that he is bound to obey God rather than men, and to break any and all human laws rather than violate conscience? And yet I have been gravely told by men whom I very much love and respect, by men of high intelligence and piety, that this is the very principle of nullification. They have reminded me of that passage of St. Paul, *Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers.*—*True,* the powers that *be,* are of God; and equally true is it, the powers that *be not,* are not of God. God never authorises man to legislate in opposition to his legislation. But it is asked, are we *never* bound to submit to unjust laws? Yes, when we can submit and not break any law of God. But when the laws require us to commit any sin, or to neglect any duty, then we are bound to break such laws. This is the doctrine of the Bible, and has been the practice of God's people in all ages. We can refer to instances without number. There is the case of Daniel, already referred to —the case of Hannaniah, otherwise called Shadrach, and his two companions—the case of the apostles, in several instances—and the case of the primitive Christians, who refused to bear arms, and who in thousands of instances died martyrs, because they refused to say one word that should be disrespectful to their Divine Master. There is the case also of the Waldenses and Albigenses, who were inhumanly massacred because

they would not comply with the unchristian demands of the church of Rome, one of the most obnoxious of which demands was, as in the very case under consideration, *that the Scriptures be kept from the hands of the common people.* I might speak likewise of the Huguenots of France, the Puritans of England, the Covenanters of Scotland, who were persecuted and killed because they obeyed God rather than man. I will allude to one more instance only. A short time since the Secretaries of the American Board, in delivering their instructions to Mr. Parker, who was about to sail for China as a missionary, gave him among other directions the following: "If he [the missionary] finds a people willing to receive him, he is to persevere in publishing to them the message of salvation, though laws and magistrates forbid, and even at the expense of liberty and life. He is not indeed to court persecution; but a people willing to receive the gospel are not to be abandoned, though all the enactments and power of their rulers are arrayed against their instruction." It is humiliating to be obliged to argue this point—to be obliged to prove, in the year 1834, that we are bound to obey God rather than man—a doctrine well understood and acted upon as far back at least as the days of Moses, who owed his life to the fact that his parents understood this doctrine and carried it out in practice. I do think that abolitionists have a right to complain, when they are bitterly reproached, as they have been throughout the land, for teaching the plain doctrine of the Bible, that we are not bound to obey laws that are contrary to the laws of God.

We come back now to the question, Is it right to withhold instruction from the slave, another day? Ought not the slave-holder to commence at once the instruction of his servants, or at least to permit others to do it? Is it right to keep them in heathenism any longer? Is it right to persist another moment in the awful crime of trampling upon the soul—of putting out the candle of the Lord in the immortal mind? I believe you will all agree with me on this point. You will admit that the slaves ought to receive something besides oral instruction, and that all the laws which forbid it are wicked and ought to be repealed. *On this point also, then, you are an immediate abolitionist.*

Call me not severe, when I say that such laws are wicked, and that the making and executing of such laws is a horrid crime. Language does not furnish words sufficiently strong to indicate the dreadfulness of this crime. Murder is considered the worst of crimes; but that is a crime against the body—this is perpetrated against the soul. It is the murder of the immortal spirit. It is making men beasts, in order that they may be more safely and profitably worked. It is shutting them out from instruction, for fear that they will learn they are men, and refuse to be treated as cattle. It is endeavoring to put out from the body that soul which God has put into it, because it is dangerous to abuse the body so long as it is inhabited by a soul that is conscious of its high origin and its eternal destiny. And when we see all this done by high-minded, intelligent, Christian men—when we see it done systematically, by law—when we see it done with cool, calculating tenacity of purpose, year after year, and generation after generation—when we see it done in the blazing light of such an age as this, at a time when all the world is crying out against such things,—where shall we find language to describe this crime? To

call it theft, or robbery, is tame. If a man steals my cloak, I call him a thief; but what shall I call the man who steals my body, and then puts out my soul, in order that he may retain the stolen property unmolested? I have dwelt particularly on this point, because it is a shocking feature in our slave system. We hear it said every day that the slaves are well treated; and what do men mean by this? Why that their bodies are well treated. And so we treat our horses and oxen well. Indeed, horses and oxen are treated better than the slaves generally are. Let a man be seen flogging his horse as cruelly as the slaves are flogged on some of the plantations, and he would cease to be respectable. But suppose the facts were otherwise. Suppose the slaves were all treated as kindly as horsss usually are. Suppose them as contented and happy as they are said to be. Admit that they can laugh and sing amid their chains, and ridicule the idea of freedom. What does this prove? Do you not see that it furnishes us with the most powerful of all arguments against the whole system? Do you not see that when you have shown that the slave can dance and make merry in his degradation, that you have proved him to be little else than a brute? Slavery has quenched the light of the soul—it has well nigh expelled the glorious spirit from the body—it has transformed the human being into an upright beast,—and this you call kind treatment. Because the heaven-born soul is brought *so* low, that it is contented with the very dust, and degradation, and pollution in which it grovels, you conclude that the slave is happy and well treated. Strange, that *good men, intelligent men,* should talk about the *kind* treatment of slaves, when the very facts which they adduce in proof are the strongest proof of their inhuman treatment. Suppose your own children and brothers and sisters were shut out from all knowledge, and reduced almost to the condition of cattle, so that they should be incapable of any enjoyment except animal enjoyment; and suppose that they were contented and merry in their brutish condition; suppose farther they had become so debased as almost to lose the desire of freedom—would you, because they happened to have food enough to keep them from starving, and clothing enough to cover their nakedness, call this kind treatment? If the persons who thus treated your children and kindred should call themselves humane and kind, what would you say? You would exclaim, out upon such humanity! it is the worst of inhumanity. Away with such kindness! it is of all cruelty the most shocking. The nearer you come to proving that the slave is contented and happy in his degradation, the nearer you come to proving by the *same* argument that the slave is a brute in intellect, and that his oppressor is cruel to the soul, although he may be kind to the body. I hope that reasonable men will give up this argument, and cease to make the threadbare and false assertion that the slaves are well treated; for, be it known, it is not kind treatment first to imbrute a man by extinguishing his mind, and then to feed him well as you do a horse.

Look now to another point of our definition. In the two positions already noticed, I believe the audience have agreed with me. Let us see if we can still go on together. Is it right to break up the marriage institution among slaves, and make them beasts in this respect, as well as in many others? Is it right to encourage, in the words of Mr. Breckenridge, "universal prostitution?" I will not insult this audience by reasoning one

moment on this point. There can be but one opinion—you will all say that this part of the system ought immediately to cease. *On this point, then, you are an immediate abolitionist.*

There is one point more to be considered. Is it right to deprive men "of the entire earnings of their labor, except only so much as is necessary to continue labor, thus committing clear robbery?" Is it right thus to hold property in man? Perhaps you will say that holding property in man is not necessarily robbery, and that it may in some instances be allowable. At least, you think it unjust to break up at once this right of property in slaves, because the laws have hitherto recognised this right, and thus encouraged the owners or their ancesters to invest their capital in this way; and now the owners are entitled to protection, on the same principle that manufacturers are. Thus you adopt the fundamental principle of slavery, that a man is *not a man*, but a *thing* or a *beast*; and that consequently the sudden repeal of the slave laws and the sudden repeal of the tariff would be equally unjust.

When will men learn the first principles of moral truth? What can be more plain, than that the laws *cannot* give to one class of men the right to own the bodies and minds of another class of men! What proposition is self-evident, if not this one, that every man *owns himself!* And yet our countrymen, all over the land, talk about the *injustice* of abolition. They call it infringing upon the property and rights of the slave-holder. He has inherited, they say, this species of property, and he cannot equitably be deprived of it.* I know not how to reason with those who thus com-

*Does injustice, by descending from father to son for two or three generations, become justice? The difference between the present generation and the first generation of slave-holders is this, the one *commenced* a system of wrong, and the other *continues* it. It is very much like the case of Adam and his posterity. If we charge the whole guilt of slavery upon a former generation, on the same principle we should make the first parents of our race accountable for all the sin that has since been committed. Suppose that your father had built his house upon the grounds of another man, and that at his death he had bequeathed the property thus unjustly seized upon to you, and that this is *all you have*—Is that property now yours? No. The title is in another man and he can claim the estate. If, then, you cannot inherit *land* unjustly seized upon, how can you inherit a whole human being? What is your title to his body and mind, received from your father, worth, compared with the higher title to his entire self which the man has received from the Father of all? Suppose that an Irish landlord has an estate which is farmed out to a hundred tenants, from each of whom he exacts double the rent which they can afford to pay, so that they are obliged to live in abject wretchedness. He dies and leaves the estate to his heir.—Will that heir be justified in oppressing his tenants on the grounds that his father did so before him? Certainly not. By what principle of right then, can the slave-holder withhold from another hundred human beings not only all property, but what is far dearer, liberty?

One illustration more.—Suppose that a planter in Virginia dies to-day and bequeaths to me one hundred slaves.—This places me in the condition of every young slave holder when he comes of age. What must I do? The laws forbid emancipation. What *can* I do? Show me some "*plan.*" This is precisely the difficulty of our Southern brethren who wish to get rid of slavery. In such a case I should perhaps consider myself bound to

mit outrage upon first principles. If men will contend that the slave-holder has property in his slaves, that the black man does not belong to himself, we shall not condescend to reason with them. Here is a man standing upon the necks of one hundred of his fellow-beings, and he says I am worth fifty thousand dollars. Another man standing by says to the abolitionist, you must not push him off by law, or by public sentiment, or even make him willing to get off himself, because you will destroy his property—property which he has *inherited*, and make him a poor man.—Shall we reason with such people? The men who hold such dreadful principles may the next moment, for aught we know, plant themselves upon our necks, and proceed to tell how much *they* are worth. They and

be the master of the slaves in *the eye of the law*, until I could get them away from the law or the law away from them, but I would dismiss the overseer, and say to them. 'I will consider you as hired laborers and give you wages. I will never sell you. I will give you the Bible and teach you to "*search*" it; and I will use all my influence to procure a change of the laws so that you can be free in form as well as in fact; or if you choose to go to the free States, or to Liberia, or to go abroad here as freemen, you are at liberty to do as you please."

Connected with this argument which attempts to defend slave-holding on the ground of *right* and *justice*, there is another which proceeds upon the ground of *expediency*. It is said that the slave would be injured by emancipation, and that consequently he should be first prepared for freedom. To this argument, these remarks may be made in reply. First.—It is not right to *enslave* men in order to make them happy. One of the arguments used in support of the slave-trade was, that it was better for the negroes to be removed from the cruelties and superstitions of Africa, to a country where they might be christianized. The fallacy of this argument is now admitted, so far as it respects the slave-trade. It is conceded that men are not to be taken from Africa and made slaves, even for the good of their souls. If, then, we may not *commence* a system of wrong, in order to make men more happy, neither can we be justified in *continuing* that system after it has been commenced. Secondly.—There is no evidence that the slave would be injured by freedom, for it would be almost impossible to make his condition worse than it is. As a *mere animal*, his situation might be more intolerable—but as a moral and intellectual being, I know not how his condition could be made worse. Thirdly.—The slave *cannot* be elevated and prepared for liberty, to any considerable extent, while in bondage. He does not feel the power of the motives to improvement which act upon the freeman. You cannot elevate him, because, while you raise him with one hand, with the other you hold him down. You must allow him to stand forth with the responsibilities of a man and choose for himself,—you must treat him as the Creator treats all his children, to wit, as a moral agent, before you can produce in him character and principle. "Many politicians of our time," says Thomas Babington McAuley in the Edinburgh Review, "are in the habit of laying it down as a self-evident proposition, that no people ought to be free, till they are fit to use their freedom. The maxim is worthy the fool in the old story, who resolved not to go into the water until he had learned to swim. If men are to wait for liberty till they become wise and good in slavery, they may indeed wait forever." This remark was in reference to *political* slavery,—its application is still stronger in the case before us. It is true of nations, and especially true of individuals, that they must learn to govern themselves by experience. The first step towards improving and elevating them, is to strike off their chains.

their shocking principles are to be driven by the searching eye of religion, and by the great voice of public sentiment, from decent society. If any have adopted, ignorantly, without examination, the principle that man may hold property in man, we would deal tenderly with such, provided they will at once examine and abandon the principle. But if they will still hold on upon it, we can only leave them to that awful storm of public indignation, now beginning to rise in its might, to sweep such principles from the nation and from the earth.

I have now gone through with the exposition of our fundamental principles. They are in as few words as these: 1. It is sinful to withhold the Bible from slaves, and it ought to be given them immediately. 2. It is sinful to destroy the marriage institution among slaves, and the slaveholder ought immediately to cease from all acts which have this tendency. 3. It is sinful to engage in or to be accessary to the domestic slave-trade, and this trade ought to be at once abolished. 4. It is sinful to claim or exercise the right of property in man, and this principle, which is the *fundamental* principle of slavery, ought at once to be given up.

When men talk of *gradual* abolition, they forget what slavery is. They have before their minds a certain form of *civil society*, which they acknowledge to be very bad, but forget that there are certain things in the system which are directly contrary to the law of God, and which consequently must not be tolerated for a moment. They forget that slavery is a transgression of all the laws in the decalogue, and that therefore to urge immediate emancipation is simply to urge immediate obedience to the ten commandments. The difference between gradual and immediate abolitionists is this: The advocates of gradual abolition look at the whole system as a subject for *political* action only. *Immediate* abolitionists look at it as a *moral* question. The former are like the politicians who would leave heathenism to be gradually undermined by the *indirect* and *silent* influences of Christianity, but who have but little confidence in the plan now proposed by evangelical Christians. The latter are like the missionaries, who attack heathenism *directly*--who go to individuals and to communities, and say to them, you ought immediately to repent of idolatry. The work of convincing men that they are in the wrong, and of leading them to repentance, is of course in this sinful world always gradual; but then the doctrine, and the only doctrine, by which the gradual change can be brought about, is that of immediate repentance. Preach to the heathen the doctrine of gradual repentance, and when will they repent? Never. Preach to slave-holders the doctrine of gradual abolition, and they will not move a step. That doctrine has been preached for forty years past in our country, most faithfully, and what has been the consequence? We have gone on, adding slave state to slave state, and increasing our half a million of slaves to two millions. The doctrine was preached in England, generation after generation, with similar results. Attempts were made to regulate and ameliorate slavery, but to use the language of Fox in relation to the slave trade, it was like "attempting to regulate murder." At length, a few years since, the doctrine of immediate emancipation was preached. At first it met with great opposition, as it now does in this country. But it was still preached—converts multiplied—the reformation went on, until a majority of the people were immediate abolitionists. Then Parliament was obliged to act.

Thus far I have spoken of the *doctrines* of the Anti-Slavery Society.—I come now to the exhibition of the plans and measures. The plan is simply this: to preach and publish the truth of God in its application to the subject of slave-holding—to induce ministers of the gospel at the South and the North to preach on this sin, as they do on all other sins, that is, affectionately, judiciously, but yet faithfully—to induce editors of papers and other periodicals to publish facts and discussions—to form anti-slavery societies, for the purpose of publishing and circulating information and supporting agents—to carry the subject before ecclesiastical bodies, and obtain from them an expression of opinion, as has been done in the cause of missions and in the temperance cause. In this way it is proposed to enlighten and reform and embody public sentiment. It is proposed also to preach on this subject to Congress, by means of petitions for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia and the Territories. And as the reformation beginning at the North shall extend South, abolitionists in the slave States—and they are already beginning to appear there—will petition their respective legislatures, and state after state will throw off the system. Only let public sentiment all over the land be corrected, and put in motion, and slavery falls; for it is public sentiment and nothing else, which sustains it. The plan, then, is to propagate the doctrines of the gospel in relation to slave-holding. But it is asked, what plan have we to propose to slave-holders and to the nation, to enable them to get rid of the evil? We have no plan except to expose sin and urge duty. When we preach to distillers and rum-sellers, we do not give them any plan by which to extricate themselves from the business. We simply show them that they are doing wrong, and that they ought immediately to stop and do right. We preach in the same way on this subject.—We point out the sin of holding slaves, and persuade to immediate repentance. But suppose the slave-holder says he *cannot* repent immediately. We reply, that perhaps he forgets what slave-holding is. Can he not immediately commence teaching the slave to read the Bible? Yes.—Can he not respect the marriage institution among the blacks, as much as among whites, and at once and forever abstain from acts that infringe upon it? Yes. Can he not cease from buying and selling human beings, and thus, so far as he is concerned, give up at once the domestic slave-trade? Yes. Can he not immediately relinquish his claim of property in his slaves, and henceforth regard them and treat them as men, that is, as *moral agents*, and not as things? Yes. Can he not begin at once to exert all his influence to procure a repeal of the slave laws? Yes. This, then, is immediate emancipation. The man who does this, does his duty. We ask nothing more than that men renounce all that is wrong, and begin at once to keep the ten commandments. We are not politicians, nor devisers of schemes. We only wish to see the mind and *heart* of the nation changed on this subject. When that is done, there will be plans enough for abolishing slavery. As soon as the majority say it must be done in *some* way, it *will* be done in some way. And although there will doubtless be a preference as to ways, still if the object is only accomplished by voluntary, peaceable means, abolitionists will not complain.

But some perhaps will say, that these are not the principles of *thoroughgoing* abolitionists. You will find that they are, if you will take the trouble

le to examine. You may sometimes, in one of the abolition papers, find these principles clothed in harsh and improper language, nevertheless these are their principles. Some have asked, why then use the word *immediate*, when it misleads the public in regard to our real principles? We reply, the word *immediate* expresses our views better than any other, and therefore we use it. Show us a better word, and we will use it. The public misunderstand us, because we have been *misrepresented*. We use the best means we can find, and explain what we mean by them; and if any will misunderstand us, and refuse to read our explanations, what can we do but to retain our phraseology, and go on explaining our meaning as fast as we can get men to listen?

Our principles, then, and our plans are these: 1. The holding of slaves is not merely an *evil*, like the plague or the cholera; it is a *sin*. 2. Immediate repentance is a duty. 3. This doctrine must be preached through the land. I now desire your attention, while I notice several objections.

First. *It is objected that abolitionists use harsh language, and manifest a bad spirit.* That they have sometimes used language unnecessarily harsh, and sometimes exhibited unkind feelings, I am free to confess, and I sincerely lament it. But I trust we have repented, and that we shall hereafter manifest more of the spirit of Christ—of his meekness, as well as of his boldness. It should be remembered, however, that abolitionists have been goaded on every side by misrepresentation, with slanderous reports, with ridicule and contempt, with mobs, with abuse and opposition of every kind; and when it is considered what poor human nature is, it is not strange that we have sometimes used language that ought not to be used, and have sometimes suffered our feelings to pass beyond virtuous indignation against sin, into unkind feelings towards sinners. But who is perfect in this respect? Luther, and Calvin, and Knox, and many other reformers, exhibited more of unchristian feeling than abolitionists have ever done; and yet their faults are passed over lightly. Some of the early writers and speakers on the subject of Temperance said many things that we considered at the time unkind. I once heard an address by a distinguished man on temperance, which was the most severe tirade I ever heard on any suject from the mouth of man. It made some angry; but it was set down to the account of excessive zeal, and easily pardened. If our *principles* are correct, (and I ask no mercy if they are not) why may not we come in for a share of this forgiveness of lighter faults? Besides, ought we to be censured in the *style* in which we are, by our opposers? At a highly respectable meeting in the city of New-York, of which the mayor was chairman, while the speakers were some of the best men in the country, such epithets as these were applied to abolitionists—"reckless incendiaries," "wild fanatics" "fire-brands," "blood-thirsty, rabid agitators." I have selected these terms from the speeches of three gentlemen of whom you have often heard. I will not mention their names, because I wish not to injure the reputation of men whom I have long respected and loved. In many respectable papers, we have been accused of aiming at an infraction of the constitution, at insurrection, and every thing bad. In five of the cities of New England and New York mobs

have come out against us,* and in one instance the mob was harrangued by one of the most respectable men in New England. And all this bitter opposition has arisen against us, because we have declared to the world our honest opinions. I speak of the treatment of our opposers, merely to show that we ought not to be denied all sympathy because we have been guilty of faults which the rest of the world under similar circumstances have always fallen into, to an equal and often to a greater extent. Furthermore, let me here correct a mistake in relation to this question touching wrong feeling. Some persons suppose that all *strong* feeling on the part of abolitionists is *wrong* feeling: but they forget that we have been searching into the cruelties of slavery—that we have been listening to the lamentations of the oppressed. They forget that we have heard from the best authority such facts as these: A gentleman of his acquaintance," said Mr. Ladd, "was offended with a female slave. He seized her by the arm, and thrust her hand into the fire, and there he held it, until it was burnt off. I saw," said Mr. Ladd, "the withering stump."† Is it wrong to *feel*, when we hear of such things? Mr. Sutcliff, an English Quaker, who travelled in this country, relates this case: "A slave owner lost a piece of leather. He charged a little slave boy with stealing it — The boy denied. The master tied the boy's feet, and suspended him from the limb of a tree, attaching a heavy weight to his ankles, as is usual in such cases, to prevent such kicking and writhing about as would break the blows. He then whipped. The boy confessed; and then he commenced whipping anew for the offence itself. At length the boy died under the lash. Then the slave-holder's own son, smitted with remorse, acknowledged that *he* took the leather." Is it wrong to speak of these facts with emotion? And when we recount these facts to our acquaintances, and they reply that there are many kind masters, and they do not wish to

*This was before the late anti-abolition riots in New York, Philadelphia and other places.

†It is said that these are instances of cruelty which rarely occur, and that if we refer to them at all as specimens of what slavery is, we ought also to place beside them the instances of humanity which are much more common. This reasoning is much like that of a man arraigned for murder, who should attempt to justify himself on the ground that a single action is not a fair specimen of his character, and that he ought not to be condemned for it.—No one pretends that *all* masters are cruel. But we say that the *system* which *occasionally* leads to such outrage, and which affords the slave no *protection* against it, is most cruel. Many masters, no doubt, treat their slaves as well as they can under the system—i. e. *they rob their fellow-men of their dearest rights in as kind a way as possible.* I am sorry to be obliged to say things on this subject that are severe: but it is the *truth* that is severe, and that must not be suppressed. I think I am not wanting in love to our brethren of the South. I love their generosity and nobleness of character—but I cannot love their oppression. And when I see them slumbering over this subject and refusing to act efficiently, trampling the slave in the dust and not appearing to know that it is criminal, I consider that our duty to them, as well as to the oppressed, requires us to speak plainly out, and assure them that they are doing wrong. So long as they do not turn their efforts in earnest to the work of breaking up this system of iniquity, we must "cry aloud, spare not, and show the people their transgression."

hear such stories, is it wrong to have feeling then? Is it a sin to sympathize with the slave! When we behold a proud and cruel nation stretching forth its hand of oppression to crush the faculties, and sending out its breath of prejudice to wither the hopes of an unoffending, helpless race, is it a sin to step forth and speak in their behalf, with all the feeling we have? Oh, my country! am I doing wrong because I plead the cause of your down-trodden, speechless children, who cannot and who dare not plead for themselves? Will you tell me that I am a man of bad spirit, because I am not cold hearted on such a subject as this? "You can easily possess yourself of facts," says Samuel J. Mills, "the bare recital of which will make the heart bleed. These facts must be proclaimed in the ears of the people, that they may be induced to send the hope of the gospel to the expiring and despairing slave." Shall we be called mad men, because we are deeply in earnest in this cause? because we urge our friends to listen to our facts, and read our publications; because we cannot speak of the miseries and wrongs of the negro in a cool, calculating, heartless way; because we consider the subject sufficiently important to be carried into our closets and into our prayer-meetings? I believe that any one who will put himself in our place, and look steadily a little while at the condition of the slave, will not blame us for having very strong feeling.

2. *It is objected that Mr. Garrison is a leading man in the society, and that his paper tends to produce insurrection.* The cause of abolition does not depend upon Mr. Garrison, and it would be unjust to charge his faults on the society. His paper is not the organ of the society—he alone is responsible for it. He has injured himself and the cause of abolition by his harsh and undignified, and sometimes unchristian language. I dislike his manner of treating this subject. Nevertheless, we should not condemn any man outright because he is not perfect, for according to that principle we should all be condemned. His character and his principles are not understood. As it respects the tendency of his paper to produce insurrection, there is a mistake on that point. He inculcates the duty of submission and non-resistance. In one of his anti-slavery hymns, he uses the following language:

> And ye who are like cattle sold,
> Bear meekly still your cruel woes.
> Not by the sword your liberty
> Shall be obtained in human blood—
> Not by revolt or treachery—
> Revenge did never bring forth good.
> God's time is best—'twill not delay—
> E'en now your cause is blossoming.

This is not the language of an incendiary. It is a happy thing that abolitionists generally adopt the thorough-going Quaker principle in regard to the sword and self-defence. Possessing as they do great influence over the blacks, they will be able to do more toward preventing insurrections than all the military power of the nation. So long as abolitionists are permitted to proceed with their plans, and thus to hold out to the oppressed the hope of deliverance, there will be little danger of insurrection. But

put down the abolitionists, and thus destroy all hope, and you will see sooner or later such convulsions as will make the nation tremble. Before leaving Mr. Garrison it should be remarked, that severe language in reference to slavery is not to be censured. It would be treacherous to the interests of the victim, to speak of slavery in such language as to keep out of view its odiousness. *Unnecessary* severity, and especially all angry feeling, is of course wrong. But many persons seem to forget that there is another extreme into which they may run, and that it is just as wrong to use language that is too soft and mild, as it is to use language which is too severe. They forget too, that when any sin has become respectable, in consequence of the number and high standing of those who practice it, that we are in far greater danger of speaking too smoothly of it, than of speaking too harshly. When we read the life of the late King of England, and find him spoken of as a *good man*, and all his vices palliated by calling them 'youthful foibles," do we not say that the man who writes such a book encourages vice, and that his fault is more unpardonable than that of the man who exposes the vices of kings in language too severe? So in this case, while some abolitionists have been too severe, have not the great body of the nation been quite as much in the wrong in covering up this sin with soft language, and with excuses for the slave-holder? Let it be observed, that in this sinful world, all moral truth which is not abstract and over our heads—all truth which relates to the heart and conduct of man—is and must be severe. The man who does not know this, has never yet learned to preach the gospel on any subject.

3. *It is objected that this is a political question.* I once feared that it would be so, and I hesitated long on this account, watching closely the movements of abolitionists, determining not to move in this business till I should be satisfied on this point. I am now thoroughly convinced that this reformation is to be a *religious* and *moral*, not a *political* reformation. It has commenced where it ought, at the house of God, among Christians. Political partizans, and particularly the mob of the country are, and for some time to come will continue to be, opposed to it. Political men will at last take it up and carry it through Congress and through the State Legislatures—but that will not be done, until it shall have become a *religious feeling* throughout a majority of the nation that slavery must be abolished. The progress of this reformation in this country will doubtless be similar to what it was in England, where for several years it was a moral question, and then for one year it was both a political and moral question. No evils arose in that country, from the bearings which this subject has upon politics—none need be apprehended in this country.

4. *It is objected that this Society encourages amalgamation.* This is altogether false—a slander upon the Society, and it is the duty of christians not only not to countenance this report, but to do what they can to counteract it. With the subject of intermarriages we have nothing to do. We do not desire to see such things take place, nor on the other hand do we think it wise or proper to make *laws* against them. If, in here and there an instance, the two races shall intermarry, we shall consider them as persons of *bad taste*, and there we shall leave the matter. Those who dread amalgamation, do not consider that the very thing which they fear is now taking place in all of the slave states at a tremendous rate, and that

emancipation will immediately check and at length nearly put an end to this sin. Abolitionists firmly believe that their plans are better fitted than any others to discourage amalgamation.

5. *It is objected that it would be dangerous and exceedingly unwise to turn loose two millions of ignorant, vicious persons.* So say we. We have never advocated the *turning loose* of slaves. On the contrary, we say it would be wrong for the slave-holder to set them afloat on society, as vagabonds. He is bound to give them employment and to see that they are instructed, and legislative bodies are bound to pass laws adapted to their condition. The emancipation of slaves from the arbitrary control of an irresponsible oppressor, and placing them under the protection of law, is one thing, and turning them loose is another. The latter would no doubt be attended with serious evils—the former is safe. It is strange that some persons see such horrors in emancipation, when all theory and all experience tell us it is safe. We appeal to South Africa for proof of the safety of emancipation. We appeal to Mexico. Above all we refer you to St. Domingo. If those who talk of St. Domingo and its horrors will study the history of that Island as presented by Clarkson, one of the most honest and candid men living, they will find that those dreadful massacres took place either before the emancipation of negroes, or at the time when the attempt was made to reduce them back to slavery; and that during the intermediate period of several years, every thing was quiet, the negroes continuing to work on the plantations as hired laborers. At this period, "the colony," says the French general, "marched as by enchantment towards its ancient splendor." Emancipation has taken place all over the Christian world, except in Brazil, a few of the West India Islands and this country, and without any bad results. But it will be said that the emancipation has not been immediate. I reply that it has been in most cases either in the strict sense immediate, or an immediate change from slavery to apprenticeship for a few years—and give us apprenticeship such as they have in the British colonies and we shall rejoice, though we do not think that full *justice* has been done to their slaves. If difficulties and insurrections should arise in carrying the plan of apprenticeship into effect, it will be, not because Parliament went too far, but because they did not go far enough. Some will say that emancipation in the West Indies does not amount to much,—that it is only taking the slave out of the hands of one master and placing him in the hands of another. This is a mistake. The difference between slavery as it now exists in this country and every kind of apprenticeship is immense.

Look at apprenticeship in the British Colonies, and apply it to the four points of the definition we have given and see how different is the condition of the blacks from what it was. First,—The right of property in man is forever abolished, and the negro is now responsible not to a master but to the law, and this change breathes into his soul the energies and the hopes of a man. Second,—The institution of marriage is protected. Third,—The Bible and all kinds and degrees of instruction, are opened to the soul, and it is now as much the interest of the community and of the government to give instruction, as it before was to withhold it. 4th,—The internal slave-trade, the buying and selling of men as beasts, and all the abominations that result from this sin, are entirely at an end. Well

may the Englishman now lift up his head among men and say, there is not a slave in all our dominions. Give us such an emancipation bill as this, and though we will not say it is the best possible, yet we will gladly receive it.

6. *It is said the slave-holder wishes to get rid of slavery, but cannot.*—We reply that he wishes for emancipation very much as the irreligious man wishes for religion. The sinner desires the reward of religion, but does not like to pass through the humiliating and troublesome process of conversion. So the slave-holder desires the blessings and safety of a different state of society, but he loves his own interest so well, that he will never do any thing to the purpose if left to himself. The only way to make him act is to press truth upon his conscience.

7. *It is objected, that this Society sets itself up as something new and peculiar*, and arrogates to itself some great discoveries on the subject of slavery: all Christians, it is said are opposed to slavery, and what is the use then of making this noise. We reply that all Christians are opposed to slavery in the same sense in which the whole church was opposed to war, and to heathenism, and to ignorance of the Bible, and to intemperance, before the establishment of Peace societies, and Missionary societies, and Bible societies, and Sabbath Schools, and Temperance societies: i. e. they are just enough opposed to it to keep silent and do nothing.—Their abolition faith is all *dead* faith. Their principles have been so long unused and laid by, that they are like the *speculative* belief which some men have in Christianity, which does them no good, but on the contrary aggravates their condemnation. "Truths of all others the most awful and interesting," says Coleridge, "are too often considered as *so* true, that they lose all the power of truth, and lie bed-ridden in the dormitory of the soul, side by side with the most despised and exploded errors."

8. *It is objected that the Society is doing nothing—that it has not emancipated any slaves.* With equal propriety it might have been said that the abolitionists of England, the day before the passing of the emancipation bill, had done nothing, and emancipated no slaves. The cause of abolition in this country has made surprising progress in the last year. The whole country is now thinking on this subject. The General Association of this State has recently passed a resolution, declaring "that to buy and sell human beings, and treat them as merchandise, is an immorality inconsistent with the Christian religion." The ecclesiastical bodies of two other New England States have passed similar resolutions. Very soon the subject will come up in the Presbyterian church, and measures will be taken to induce ministers and members of that church in slave-holding states to do their duty. Other churches will do the same; and thus the reformation will go on, till public opinion shall be purified—and who knows not that *public opinion* can do every thing? It puts down old governments, and puts up new ones; it can prostrate one system, and erect another on its ruins; it can drive vice like a sweeping tornado from the world, and it can gather virtue in its arms like a guardian angel. Public sentiment, thou art every thing! Let thy voice, then, go forth, and utter its denunciations in the halls of slavery, and they will fall. Let the light of thy searching eye penetrate the recesses of selfishness, and sophistry, and sensuality, and all our darkness on this subject will be as noon-day.

Let the protection of thy powerful hand be extended to the black man, and he will be raised from the depths of his degradation, and the putting forth of the finger at him will cease.

9. *It is said that it is not time yet to commence the agitation of this subject.* When, then, will it be time? We are preparing to convert the world; and can we go and preach righteousness to others, while we are cherishing in our own bosom one of the worst vices of heathenism? Had we not better pull the beam out of our own eye, and then go and pull the mote out of our brother's eye? We think we are living on the borders of the millennium; and shall this sin be permitted to extend out into the millennium—a dark promontory of guilt into an ocean of light and purity? This sin lies across the path of all our benevolent efforts. In sending our Bibles and our tracts to other countries, we walk directly over the bodies and minds of our own countrymen. We even enrich ourselves, and acquire the means of Christianizing the Hindoo and Chinese, by heathenizing the colored American. And with this inconsistency, written in letters of blood upon our national character—an inconsistency which all the world except ourselves can see—shall we say that it is not *time yet* to commence the work of repentance? shall we keep these two millions of the present generation in the dust, and gather about their immortal souls still darker and heavier clouds of ignorance and pollution, and wait till the five millions of the next generation rise up before us, in a condition so beset with difficulties that even abolitionists, with all their imputed recklessness will not dare do any thing? Go tell the impenitent sinner, along whose pathway the law and the gospel utter the curses of God, that he may safely delay repentance, but tell not this impenitent nation that procrastination is safe.

10. *It is objected that the measures used by this Society will endanger the Union* We reply that the union has long been in danger, and that we are seeking to remove as speedily as possible the grand cause of jealousy and irritation and danger to the union. The nation is diseased, and disease is advancing fast upon the vitals of the country. This society urges an application of the remedy that can save us. The union of these states must inevitably be broken up, sooner or later, if slavery continues. The sooner, therefore, emancipation begins, the better. But emancipation never will begin, unless it is first thoroughly discussed. Light and facts must be let in upon the whole nation. The law of God in relation to this subject must be faithfully preached and published throughout the land.—Do you say this is a delicate subject, and the agitation of it in any way will destroy the constitution. This is a libel on the constitution. Our constitution would not be worthy of respect, if there were any moral subject on which we could not safely preach the truth faithfully. What! do you tell us that we are living under a constitution which will be destroyed if the sins of the nation are exposed—if the truth of God is fearlessly preached. How could you more certainly bring the constitution into contempt, than by speaking so lightly of it? We think differently of the constitution. We respect and love it, and for the very reason that we believe that we may preach the truth on any subject with safety. I might dwell long on this topic, but there is not time. I will only say in dismissing it, that such is the state of things in this country, and such the relations which we sustain to the moral interests of the world, that if this re-

formation does not go forward, this nation is ruined, and the conversion of the world thrown back none can tell how far.

11. *It is said that the Bible does not condemn slavery, nor require immediate emancipation.* He who says so, forgets what *American slavery* is. Does the Bible sanction the continuance of the domestic slave-trade—the buying and selling of men as well as horses? Does it allow us to separate wives from husbands, and parents from children, and thus to break up families and the institution of marriage? Does it countenance the worse than papal doctrine of withholding from men not only the Bible, but all other books? Does it teach that an Ethiopian does not belong to himself, but to some other person—that he is to be accounted "goods and chattels, to all intents and purposes,"—that men may hold *property* in immortal beings created in the image of God? The whole spirit of the Bible is against such things. It is against oppression and injustice in *every form*, and surely it condemns injustice so flagrant. And whatever it condemns as wrong, it requires should be *immediately* repented of. The idea of gradual repentance is not to be found in the Book. But it is said that there are some things in the Scriptures which appear to excuse, if not to justify slavery. So the Scriptures contain some things which appear to justify polygamy. The Mohammedan could make out a more plausible argument in favor of this sin, than has ever been brought forward in justification of slave-holders. The Bible has been quoted also in opposition to the doctrines of the temperance reform. It has been urged that the principle of total abstinence is not in the Bible; and it is quite as difficult to satisfy an opposer of temperance on this point, as it is to satisfy an opposer of abolition in regard to the sinfulness of slave-holding. Those who go to the Bible for arguments in favor of doing wrong, seldom fail of finding something to answer their purpose. The time is coming, however, when men will be ashamed of their attempts to justify slave-holding from the word of God. But is farther said, there is no specific command on this subject. Suppose it were so. Neither is there any specific command which forbids forgery. There is no mention whatever of forgery in the Bible. Is it therefore innocent? It is not true, however, that there is nothing specific in the Scriptures on this subject. In the 58th chapter of Isaiah, we find this passage: "Is not this the fast that I have chosen, to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?" There is also another specific command of the Bible, that forbids such slavery as we have been considering. It is the eighth command of the decalogue. *Thou shalt not steal.* This forbids our taking any part of the property of another. But the holder of slaves takes the whole—the time, the wages, the body, the mind, every thing in short that can possibly be grasped. We put the question, now, to conscience, are the principles of right and wrong, are the requirements of God's law so contradictory, so absurd, that that they make it a high crime to steal even a dollar from one man, while they allow you to steal from another man all that he hath—his whole self?*

*He that stealeth a man and selleth him, *or if he be found in his hand*, he shall surely be put to death.—Exod. xxi. 16.

Again, it is said that our Saviour and his apostles did not preach against slavery. The reason why the Saviour is silent on this subject, doubtless is, that slavery did not then exist in Judea. The apostles afterwards came in contact with it, but did not attack it for two reasons: first, the slavery with which they had to do was in one important respect different from that which exists in our country. It did not require the shutting out of instruction, and the consequent degradation of the soul. Terence, the poet, was a slave. Horace was the son of a freedman. The slaves of whom Paul speaks in his epistles were not forbidden to read those epistles. Secondly, the apostles attacked the *prominent* and *worst* sins of the age. Paul's preaching to the Athenians was directed against idolatry, because, as he passed through their streets, that was the worst sin he saw. Were he to visit the plantations of America, he would preach against slavery. He would not look upon a population denied the Bible and essentially heathen, though in the midst of an enlightened and Christian country, and yet keep silence. He would not see men treated as property, bought and sold as brutes, and then call it a delicate subject, and no concern of his.

12. *It is maintained that expediency justifies the continuance of slavery, at least for the present.* The word *expediency* is used in different senses. It has reference to the greatest good. We may mean the greatest good of the whole universe, throughout eternity, or we may mean the greatest present good. Expediency understood in the first mentioned sense, as referring to the whole moral system in the long run, as it is called, is doubtless to be regarded. But where expediency has respect to a part only of the universe, and to a small segment only of the great circle of eternity, the case is essentially changed. Expediency of the former kind, that is, on the great scale, coincides exactly with right and the law of God, and is in fact but another name for right, and duty, and law—inasmuch as right and law are founded upon regard to the greatest good, or *general* expediency. But expediency of the latter kind, i. e. on the small scale, may be the same as selfishness and sin. And it is in this last mentioned sense that the word is commonly used. In no sense, consequently, does expediency justify a departure from the laws of God—for *general* expediency being the same thing in principle as the law of course requires the same thing, namely, obedience; and *partial* expediency, for the very reason that it is partial, cannot set aside the higher and paramount claims of the law. To render the point under consideration more clear, let it be illustrated thus: Suppose that you owe an intemperate man ten dollars—that he demands payment of the debt—that you fear if you pay him he will go to the dram-shop, become intoxicated, and then go home and abuse his family. What ought you to do in such a case? Expediency on the small scale says, withhold the money—at the best it can do him no good, and there is no danger that the consequences may be bad. On the other hand, the law of God and general expediency say, pay the man—you justly owe him, and you must not do wrong to prevent another from doing wrong.—Do *your* duty, and leave the consequences with God. If you pay the money, it may occasion sin and suffering; but if you withhold it, you will break thro' a principle upon which the interests of the universe and eternity depend—you will transgress the everlasting law of truth and honesty, and

what is worse still, you will set up your opinion of what is best above that of the Supreme Ruler; for he has told you that the best way to promote the general good is to *render unto all their dues*, whereas you decide that it is better in some cases not to render that which is due. You take it upon yourself to set aside the law of God, whenever you think that your own plan is better. But this must not be. However honestly you may differ from God in your views of what is best, you must not disobey. If you are the owner of slaves, and honestly think that it is for their interest not to have the Bible, nor to receive pay for the labor, you must not transgress the Divine law. Even if you could prove that it would be better for your bondsmen to continue as they are for the present—a position that has been often taken, but never proved—still you do not know that it will be better on the whole, on the broad scale of eternity, to deny them the privileges of freemen. So that you cannot prove it to be even *expedient* (understanding the word as it ought to be understood) to claim the right of property in your fellow men.

13. It is said, that conceding all which has been advanced, still the best way to attack slavery is to preach the gospel, and thus *undermine it by indirect means*. We say in reply, by all means preach the gospel, but be sure that you preach the *whole* gospel—undermine slavery, but do it in the only way in which it can be done, by attacking the false principles upon which it is based. This *indirect* way of undermining slavery has been tried for years, and the system, instead of being weakened, has waxed stronger and stronger. So long as intemperance was attacked only in the indirect way, by preaching the gospel, as you call it, that is, by preaching against all other sins except the one to be destroyed, the sin grew worse and worse; but when the doctrine of total abstinence was announced, and urged directly, faithfully, in the face of opposition, then intemperance was beaten back. So now, let the doctrine that it is a sin to hold property in man—a doctrine which strikes at the root of the slave system—be faithfully preached, and the whole system will come to the ground, and no other *moral* means can bring it down. *Indirect* means, and the doctrine of gradual repentance, will have the same effect upon slavery that the doctrine of moderate drinking once had upon intemperance—they will perpetuate and increase the evil.

14. I notice but one more objection. *It is said that abolitionists oppose the Colonization Society.* It is not true that we wish to put down the *colony* at Liberia. We wish to have it prosper, and therefore we wish to prevent crowding its population with vicious and improper persons. I quote the following from Mr. Garrison's thoughts on Colonization: "Let the colony continue to receive the aid and elicit the prayers of the good and benevolent. Blot it not out of existence. But henceforth let it develope itself naturally. Crowd not its population. Let transportation cease. Seek no longer to exile millions of our colored countrymen; for assuredly, if the Colonization Society succeed in its efforts to remove thousands of this number annually, it could not inflict a heavier curse upon Africa, or more speedily assist in the entire subversion of the colony." Only let the colony be well managed, and we hope that hereafter it will be; let ardent spirits be excluded, and the society is doing what it can

to bring this about; let the colony be made as far as possible a Christian colony for the benefit of Africa, and not a place for turning loose thousands of ignorant and vicious persons; and we shall make no objection to *such* a colony. On the contrary, we will encourage it. Still we see no connection between a colony and the abolition of slavery, and but little connection between a colony and the spiritual good of Africa. Some of our objections to the Colonization Society are the following; and in order to show that they are well founded, I will quote the words of the friends of the Society. Mr. Gerrit Smith, in his speech at the last annual meeting of the society, remarked that "the belief is prevailing pretty rapidly at the North, that our society obstructs the dearly cherished cause of emancipation. I would that we had not given too much cause for the propagation of this belief. If there are apologies for slavery, it is not for our society to hunt them up. If there are efforts made for the abolition of slavery, it does not belong to our society to oppose them. Our society, by offering such apologies and by opposing such efforts, has already cooled the ardor of many of its friends, and greatly multiplied its opponents. The objection to our society is well taken, that in some of its publications it assumes the position that slavery in this country is to be opposed by indirect means only, and that in the society, in itself alone, are these means to be found." Mr. Smith proceeds: "There is another objection to this society, which to my mind is still more weighty: it is, that it has been greatly, lamentably, wickedly deficient in pity of the free people of color. I will not deny to the colored man a perfect right to a home on this soil. I regret that any member of this society should ever have denied this right. It is no wonder to me that they have had feelings of jealousy towards us, and a want of confidence in the sincerity of our professions of kindness. We ourselves have given too much occasion for this, in our speeches and publications. We have looked too little to their benefit, and too much to the political and social advantages which we supposed would arise to *ourselves* from the separation. And our project, which should have been held up as one of the purest and highest benevolence, has been degraded to a mere drain for the escape of this nuisance." "Let us correct this, and place our society on its true ground; let us make Africa a desirable home for men of color, and they will find their own way to its shores" Mr. Breckenridge, at the same meeting, said, "There is an immense aggregate of blame somewhere, and I want to find where it belongs, and put it there. Two years ago I warned the managers against this Virginia business. And yet they sent away two ship loads of vagabonds, not fit to go to such a place, and that were coerced away us truly as if it had been done with a cart whip." Mr. Bacon, at the same meeting, remarked, that "not only the state of the society, but the condition of the colony, was such as must horrify every friend of the cause. He believed it would require an expenditure of fifty thousand dollars during the present year, to put the colony on a footing of prosperity." To such Colonizationists we do not object; and so soon as the society generally shall come into these views, and shall cease to stand in the way of efforts for the improvement and emancipation of the colored race, then the two societies can be like brothers in the same holy cause Till then, however, we consider it our duty to the slaves, to our country,

and to the Colonization Society, to state our objections honestly, fearlessly, yet kindly. That spirit of unkindness which has been so common on both sides, it is hoped will cease.

And now, my friends, I have placed before you the principles and designs of the Anti-Slavery Society. I leave it for you to decide what your duty is to the slave, or whether you have *any duty* to discharge to him.—For myself, I feel impelled, by all there is of humanity and religion within me, to engage in this cause. I know that I do it with the disapprobation of friends whom I love and respect; but my conscience will not let me do otherwise. I must go with the abolitionists. I must go and take my stand with them, between the oppressor and the oppressed, and with one hand stretched out to the oppressor, we will say, *repent;* and with the other stretched out to the oppressed, we will say, *avenge not yourselves.*—This is our ground, and no power on earth will be able to drive us from it; for we stand upon the great principles of Christianity. We have on either side the pillars of truth and justice. We have with us our Bible and our God. And think you we can ever abandon such ground as this? We have beheld the *tears of the oppressed, who have no comforter.* We have undertaken to plead their cause, and we mean to plead it, so long as we have a voice to lift up in their behalf. At the North and at the South, we mean to plead their cause. Whenever the spirit of slave-holding exists, we shall preach repentance. Say not that we are wanting in courage, because we do not go to the South. We are there already, and we shall soon be there in greater numbers. We shall go there, and say unto slaves, *Obey your masters,* and unto masters, *Give unto your slaves that which is just and equal.* We wish not insurrection. We are men of peace. We have thrown away entirely and forever the sword of man, and have taken in its place the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. If the enemies of truth shall sometimes be stirred up to anger, we shall not be in fault. They will soon learn that we tell them the truth, not because we are their enemies, but because we are their friends—not because we are wild fanatics, but because we are honest Christians—not because we have not studied the subject, but because we *have* studied it—not because we are reckless of consequences, but because we confide in the principles of God's government more than in the bare assertions of man. The discussion of this subject will doubtless make noise, but better have the noise of argument than the slumber of guilt. We are sleeping upon a volcano. Let truth, therefore, go abroad, and awake the nation before it shall be too late. The nation is beginning to awake. The wheels of a mighty moral revolution are beginning to roll, and they will roll on—for the hand of the great Friend of the oppressed is moving them.

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